

I own a small internet-based business. The internet is a wonderful invention that has allowed me, without venture capital or outside investment, to build up a small business completely by myself that competes with larger, more well-heeled companies.

ISPs claim abolishing net neutrality laws will allow them to create “fast lanes” to improve the speed of certain services for consumers. But consumers are already enjoying services like Netflix without complaint. Why would a company like Netflix pay to speed up their service if consumers already enjoy it at its current speed? The only way to achieve this would be to artificially slow it down so that the service is unusable unless Netflix pays a fee to speed it up. That sounds exactly like extortion.

Were net neutrality laws to change and ISPs delivered an unacceptably slow service unless I paid each individually then small companies like mine could no longer compete with deep-pocketed competitors. My company would be forced out of business. The internet has been a positive force in my life in so many ways and I owe my entire livelihood to it.

If net neutrality goes away, the FCC would have created a world in which only large companies can survive and consumers would suffer fewer choices and higher prices as a result. The internet is rich in its variety and would become far less so if I could only visit sites “blessed” by Comcast.

I also have concerns about freedom of information. If I am a Verizon customer, will Verizon make negative news articles about Verizon load so slowly that I cannot read them? If I don't like my service at Comcast, will Comcast make its competitors' websites load so slowly that I cannot switch? Will AT&T make news sources that fit its political agenda load faster?

Broadband internet access is a telecommunications service. My ISP gives me a dumb pipe through which I can access other companies' services. I receive no other services from my ISP; email, cloud storage, web hosting etc, are all obtained through other companies. This is exactly the same as a phone: the phone provider gives me a line through which I can call other companies and obtain services from them. The phone provider does not try to dictate or favor a particular plumber to call when my boiler is broken.

Chairman Pai said that because users do not select particular servers to connect to, internet access is therefore not a telecommunications service. Such an argument seems a trivial technicality. While I may not select a particular server, I am actively selecting the SERVICE itself. It also ignores the fact that many smaller sites may not use load balancing or caching and therefore may be entirely based on a single server.

Chairman Pai said if users do not like the way an ISP is enforcing anti-net neutrality rules, all customers have to do is switch to another provider. This would be acceptable were there not a severe lack of competition in the cable industry. I live in a major metropolitan area yet only one ISP in my zip code offers fast speeds. This ISP knows they are the only fast ISP in the area and does not endeavor to deliver a reliable

service. My internet connection goes down 3-5 times EVERY DAY and I cannot switch to a competitor because I would have to accept a speed that is around 25% of what I am getting now. So I am stuck with a poor service that I am unhappy with even with net neutrality laws in place. The mere idea of being able to shop around and pick and choose internet access is laughable to me.

If the FCC rescinds its authority over broadband ISPs, not only can my ISP continue to deliver an unacceptable quality of service but they can also double the price overnight without fear of repercussions. Free market economics only work in markets with sufficient competition. There is not enough competition in the broadband market for these issues to address themselves. The government needs to regulate in order to ensure fair pricing and good service for consumers. For this reason and the reasons above, ISPs should continue to be classed as common carriers.

P.S. I had to submit this feedback using my phone's LTE connection because my broadband connection wasn't reliable enough.